

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

NOTIFICATION OF THE RECORDING
OF A CHANGE(PCT Rule 92bis.1 and
Administrative Instructions, Section 422)

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

To:

SLINGSBY, Philip, Roy
Page White & Farrer
54 Doughty Street
London WC1N 2LS
ROYAUME-UNIDate of mailing (day/month/year)
18 January 2002 (18.01.02)Applicant's or agent's file reference
102783/PRS

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION

International application No.
PCT/IB00/01316International filing date (day/month/year)
05 September 2000 (05.09.00)

1. The following indications appeared on record concerning:

☒ the applicant ☐ the inventor ☐ the agent ☐ the common representative

Name and Address

NOKIA NETWORKS OY
Keilalahdentie 4
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Finland

State of Nationality

FI

State of Residence

FI

Telephone No.

Facsimile No.

Teleprinter No.

2. The International Bureau hereby notifies the applicant that the following change has been recorded concerning:

☐ the person ☐ the name ☐ the address ☐ the nationality ☐ the residence

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State of Residence

FI

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Teleprinter No.

3. Further observations, if necessary:

4. A copy of this notification has been sent to:

☒ the receiving Office ☐ the designated Offices concerned
☐ the International Searching Authority ☒ the elected Offices concerned
☒ the International Preliminary Examining Authority ☐ other:The International Bureau of WIPO
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Authorized officer

Ingrid AULICH

Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

NOTIFICATION OF THE RECORDING
OF A CHANGE(PCT Rule 92bis.1 and
Administrative Instructions, Section 422)

To:

SLINGSBY, Philip, Roy
Page White & Farrer
54 Doughty Street
London WC1N 2LS
ROYAUME-UNI

Date of mailing (day/month/year) 07 June 2001 (07.06.01)	IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION
Applicant's or agent's file reference 102783/PRS	
International application No. PCT/IB00/01316	International filing date (day/month/year) 05 September 2000 (05.09.00)

1. The following indications appeared on record concerning:

☒ the applicant ☒ the inventor ☐ the agent ☐ the common representative

Name and Address

MELERO, Juan
Keilalahdentie 4
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Finland

State of Nationality

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State of Residence

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Facsimile No.

Teleprinter No.

2. The International Bureau hereby notifies the applicant that the following change has been recorded concerning:

☐ the person ☐ the name ☒ the address ☐ the nationality ☐ the residence

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State of Nationality

ES

State of Residence

ES

Telephone No.

Facsimile No.

Teleprinter No.

3. Further observations, if necessary:

4. A copy of this notification has been sent to:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the receiving Office	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the designated Offices concerned
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the International Searching Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> the elected Offices concerned
<input type="checkbox"/> the International Preliminary Examining Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

The International Bureau of WIPO
34, chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

Authorized officer

Olivia TEFY

Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38

PCT

(PCT Rule 61.2)

**Commissioner
US Department of Commerce
United States Patent and Trademark
Office, PCT
2011 South Clark Place Room
CP2/5C24
Arlington, VA 22202.
ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE**
in its capacity as elected Office

Date of mailing (day/month/year) 08 June 2001 (08.06.01)	ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE in its capacity as elected Office
International application No. PCT/IB00/01316	Applicant's or agent's file reference 102783/PRS
International filing date (day/month/year) 05 September 2000 (05.09.00)	Priority date (day/month/year) 20 September 1999 (20.09.99)
Applicant MELERO, Juan	

- made before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date or, where Rule 32 applies, within the time limit under Rule 32.2(b).

<p>The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland</p> <p>Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35</p>	<p>Authorized officer</p> <p>Olivia TEFY</p> <p>Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38</p>
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PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 102783/PRS	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Notification of Transmittal of International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/220) as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/IB 00/01316	International filing date (day/month/year) 05/09/2000	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 20/09/1999
Applicant NOKIA NETWORKS OY et al.		

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 2 sheets.



It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

- a. With regard to the **language**, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.



the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

- b. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing :



contained in the international application in written form.



filed together with the international application in computer readable form.



furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.



furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.



the statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.



the statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished

2. ☐ **Certain claims were found unsearchable** (See Box I).

3. ☐ **Unity of invention is lacking** (see Box II).

4. With regard to the **title**,

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.



the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the **abstract**,

the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.



the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box III. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. The figure of the **drawings** to be published with the abstract is Figure No.

as suggested by the applicant.



because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.



because this figure better characterizes the invention.

3



None of the figures.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/EP 00/01316

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 H04Q7/38

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 H04Q

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X A A	WO 98 57512 A (ERICSSON TELEFON AB L M) 17 December 1998 (1998-12-17) the whole document --- DE 197 42 650 A (SIEMENS AG) 8 April 1999 (1999-04-08) the whole document -----	1-3, 5, 13-21 22, 23 1-23

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- *E* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- *L* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- *P* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- *T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- *X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- *Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- *&* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

16 January 2001

Date of mailing of the international search report

22/01/2001

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Coppieters, S

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/00/01316

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
WO 9857512 A	17-12-1998	AU 8046298 A CN 1260940 T EP 0988762 A	30-12-1998 19-07-2000 29-03-2000
DE 19742650 A	08-04-1999	AU 9735298 A CN 1271502 T WO 9917577 A EP 1020093 A	23-04-1999 25-10-2000 08-04-1999 19-07-2000


PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

REC'D 05 FEB 2002

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT PCT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 102783/PRS		FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/IB00/01316	International filing date (day/month/year) 05/09/2000	Priority date (day/month/year) 20/09/1999	
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC H04Q7/38			
Applicant NOKIA NETWORKS OY et al.			
<p>1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.</p> <p>2. This REPORT consists of a total of 9 sheets, including this cover sheet.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).</p> <p>These annexes consist of a total of 11 sheets.</p>			
<p>3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basis of the reportII <input type="checkbox"/> PriorityIII <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicabilityIV <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of unity of inventionV <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statementVI <input type="checkbox"/> Certain documents citedVII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain defects in the international applicationVIII <input type="checkbox"/> Certain observations on the international application			
Date of submission of the demand 18/04/2001		Date of completion of this report 01.02.2002	
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465		Authorized officer Jaskolski, J Telephone No. +49 89 2399 7567	



INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/IB00/01316

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17):*)

Description, pages:

1,2,5,8-15	as originally filed			
3,3a,16	as received on	29/10/2001	with letter of	29/10/2001
4,6,7	as received on	17/01/2002	with letter of	16/01/2002

Claims, No.:

6-19	as received on	29/10/2001	with letter of	29/10/2001
1-5,20-23	as received on	17/01/2002	with letter of	16/01/2002

Drawings, sheets:

1/2,2/2	as originally filed
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2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/IB00/01316

listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
- ☐ the claims, Nos.:
- ☐ the drawings, sheets:

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

III. Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability

1. The questions whether the claimed invention appears to be novel, to involve an inventive step (to be non-obvious), or to be industrially applicable have not been examined in respect of:

- ☐ the entire international application.
- ☒ claims Nos. 5.

because:

- ☐ the said international application, or the said claims Nos. relate to the following subject matter which does not require an international preliminary examination (*specify*):
- ☒ the description, claims or drawings (*indicate particular elements below*) or said claims Nos. 5 are so unclear that no meaningful opinion could be formed (*specify*):
see separate sheet
- ☐ the claims, or said claims Nos. are so inadequately supported by the description that no meaningful opinion could be formed.
- ☐ no international search report has been established for the said claims Nos. .

2. A meaningful international preliminary examination cannot be carried out due to the failure of the nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence listing to comply with the standard provided for in Annex C of the Administrative Instructions:

- ☐ the written form has not been furnished or does not comply with the standard.
- ☐ the computer readable form has not been furnished or does not comply with the standard.

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/IB00/01316

**V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability;
citations and explanations supporting such statement**

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes:	Claims	1-4,6-23
	No:	Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes:	Claims	1-4,6-23
	No:	Claims	
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes:	Claims	1-4, 6-23
	No:	Claims	

**2. Citations and explanations
see separate sheet**

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/IB00/01316

Reference is made to the following documents:

- D1: WO 98 57512 A (ERICSSON TELEFON AB L M) 17 December 1998 (1998-12-17)
D2: DE 197 42 650 A (SIEMENS AG) 8 April 1999 (1999-04-08)

Re Item III

1. Dependent claim 5 is not clear (Article 6 PCT). Claim 5 states that "periodically link messages contain link information for the same ones of the communication links", which is contrary to the feature of claim 1 that periodically transmitted link messages collectively contain link information for a set of communication links larger than the first set of communication links. The requirement to enlarge the first set of communication links imply that **not all transmitted link messages contain link information for the same ones of the communication links**. Because there is no relation defined between the periods of claim 1 and claim 5, if these periods are assumed to be the same period, then, according to claim 5, **all the transmitted link messages will contain link information for the same ones of the communication links**. Thus the features of claim 5 in particular situation contest the features of claim 1, to which claim 5 refers. Therefore the scope of protection of claim 5 is unclear and the opinion on patentability of claim 5 can not be formulated. Relation between the periods of claim 1 and claim 5, which could be used to clarify claim 5 can be found in the description on page 4, lines 22-24, but is not defined in the claims.

Re Item V

1. The application as per claim 1 relates to a method for reporting link information in a communication system including a communication terminal and a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link, in which method the communication terminal determines link information for each of the communication links and periodically transmits link messages, each link message containing link information for a first set of the communication links, and the link messages being

formatted in accordance with a predetermined scheme such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a set of communication links larger than the first set of communication links.

The application solves a two-part problem. The first part of the problem is a limited space in a TDMA frame of the GSM system, the space limiting the number of reported communication links in the link message to six. The second part of the problem is that information about certain set of important from the point of view of the system communication links should be sent in every link message. The two-part problem is solved by:

- 1) sending in every link message information for a first set of the communication links; and
- 2) sending in the consecutive messages, information about links not reported, due to lack of space, in earlier messages.

The invention according to claim 1 is applicable to any communication system having limited space for link information in link reporting messages.

Methods for reporting link information in a communication system are known in the art and in particular from the document D1.

Document D1 discloses a method for reporting link information in a communication system including a communication terminal and a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link. The communication terminal of D1 determines link information for each of the communication links and periodically transmits link messages, each link message containing link information for a currently considered set of communication links. The currently considered set of communication links is limited to six by the space dedicated to such information in a TDMA frame of the GSM system, and corresponds to the first set of the communication links of claim 1.

Method of D1 solves the problem of reporting link information during active mode, the information obtained by the communication terminal in an idle mode.

D1 indicates the second part of the problem of the application: the limitation of space used to report link messages, however no attempt is made in D1 to solve it.

It may randomly happen in the system of D1, that each link message will contain link information for a first set of the communication links, and the link messages will be formatted such that groups of successive link messages collectively will contain link information for a set of communication links larger than the first set of communication links, however such situation is not pre-determined in the system of D1 in accordance with any scheme, and may happen in purely random configurations of transmitted data only. Therefore the feature that a **predetermined formatting scheme exists** in the system differentiates the subject-matter of claim 1 from D1.

Document D2 discloses a method for reporting link information in a communication system including a communication terminal and a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link. The communication terminal of D2 determines link information for each of the communication links and periodically transmits link messages, each link message containing link information for a currently considered set of communication links and the link messages are formatted in accordance with a predetermined scheme such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a set of communication links larger than the first set of communication links. The currently considered set of communication links is different in every message sent. Method of D2 solves the problem of limited space dedicated to such information in a TDMA frame of the GSM system by coding the information to be transmitted in the way to create a reference between the previously reported link information and a new reported link information data. By creating this reference to previously transmitted data some part of the link information space can be saved, which allows to use this part to report additional information concerning another links. The document D2 neither disclose nor suggests that **each link message contains link information for a first set of the communication links**, so D2 does not addresses the first part of the problem of the application.

The claimed method, in particular the combination of the following features:

- 1) **each link message contains link information for a first set of the communication links, and**
- 2) **the link messages are formatted in accordance with a predetermined**

scheme such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a set of communication links larger than the first set of communication links,

is neither taught, nor rendered obvious, alone or in combination, by the prior art documents acknowledged in the description or cited in the International Search Report.

The above cited combination of features is considered in view of the available prior art to be the characterising feature of the invention.

This combination allows to, using limited space in a TDMA frame of the GSM system, report more than six measured communication links, and accordingly, link information about certain communication links can be reported in every link message.

The skilled person would not, while looking for the solution to the second part of the problem, the second part of the problem indicated in D1, arrive at the combination of the solutions presented by the documents D1 and D2, because the solution of the second part of the problem found in D2 technically excludes the solution to the first part of the problem found in D1, and vice versa. Thus, in order to solve the both parts of the problem, the skilled person would have to involve an inventive step.

The subject-matter of claim 1 is therefore novel and considered to involve an inventive step, Article 33(2) and (3) PCT. The subject-matter of claim 1 is also industrially applicable.

2. Independent claims 22 and 23 define a communication system and a communication terminal respectively, corresponding to the method of claim 1. Therefore the subject-matter of claims 22 and 23 equally meets the requirements of Article 33(1) PCT.
3. Dependent claims 2 to 4 and 6 to 21 relate to further implementation details of the method defined by the independent claim 1, to which they refer and are therefore equally novel, inventive and industrially applicable.

Description remark: the amended page 4 has two first lines of the originally filed page 4

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/IB00/01316

missing, which renders the sentence between the amended page 3a and page 4 unclear.

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
29 March 2001 (29.03.2001)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/22765 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **H04Q 7/38**

(21) International Application Number: **PCT/IB00/01316**

(22) International Filing Date:
5 September 2000 (05.09.2000)

(25) Filing Language: **English**

(26) Publication Language: **English**

(30) Priority Data:
9922204.4 20 September 1999 (20.09.1999) **GB**

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **NOKIA NETWORKS OY [FI/FI]; Keilalahdentie 4, FIN-02150 Espoo (FI).**

(72) Inventor; and

(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): **MELERO, Juan [ES/FI]; Nokia Networks Oy, Keilalahdentie 4, FIN-02150 Espoo (FI).**

(74) Agents: **SLINGSBY, Philip, Roy et al.; Page White & Farrer, 54 Doughty Street, London WC1N 2LS (GB).**

(81) Designated States (national): **AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.**

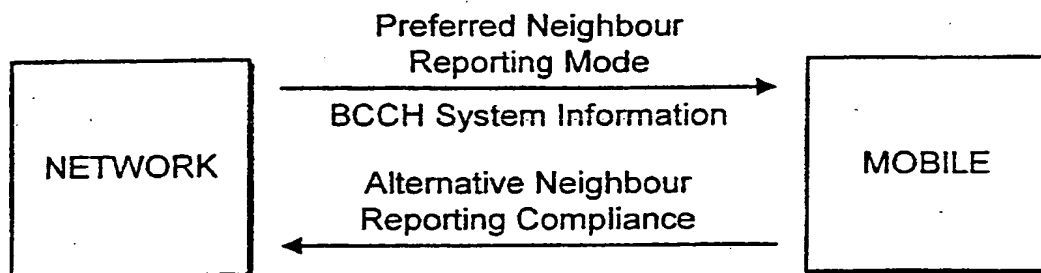
(84) Designated States (regional): **ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).**

Published:

- *With international search report.*
- *Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments.*

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: **REPORTING COMMUNICATION LINK INFORMATION**



(57) Abstract: A method for reporting link information in a communication system including a communication terminal and a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link; the method comprising: the communication terminal determining link information for each of the communication links; and the communication terminal periodically transmitting link messages, each link message containing link information for a first set of the communication links, and the link messages being formatted such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a larger set of the communication links.

REPORTING COMMUNICATION LINK INFORMATION

This invention relates to a method for reporting information on communication links, for example link quality information, in a telecommunications system such as a cellular radio telecommunications network.

Figure 1 shows schematically the configuration of a typical cellular radio telecommunications network. The network comprises a number of base-stations (BSs) 1, 2, 3 etc. Each base-station has a radio transceiver capable of transmitting radio signals to and receiving radio signals from the area of a cell 4, 5, 6 etc. next to the base-station. By means of these signals the base-station can communicate with a mobile station (MS) terminal 7 in that cell, which itself includes a radio transceiver. Each base station is connected to a mobile system controller (MSC) 8, which is linked in turn to the public telephone network 9 and/or to other networks such as packet data networks. By means of this system a user of the MS 7 can establish a telephone call to the public network 9 via a BS in whose cell the MS is located.

The location of the MS could be fixed (for example if it is providing radio communications for a fixed building) or the MS could be moveable (for example if it is a hand portable transceiver or "mobile phone"). When the MS is moveable it may move between cells of the cellular radio system. As it moves from one cell (the "old cell") to another cell (the "new cell") there is a need to hand it over from communication with the BS of the old cell to the BS of the new cell without dropping the call due to a break in communications between the mobile station and the network. This process is known as handover. A need can also arise to hand over a MS whose location is fixed, for example if atmospheric conditions affect its communications with the old BS and call quality can be improved by handing it over to another BS or if there is a need to free up capacity of the old BS.

In some systems, for example the wideband code division multiple access (W-CDMA) system proposed for the Universal Mobile Telephony System (UMTS), a mobile station is capable of making traffic communications with more than one base station at one time. This macrodiversity arrangement allows greater reliability of communications and can reduce the required transmission power. It also means that handovers between one base station and another can be performed in a gradual ("soft") rather than an abrupt ("hard") way.

It is conventional for the system to include apparatus for controlling handover and macrodiversity. That apparatus could be on the network side (for example at the MSC) or the mobile side of the air interface between the MS and a BS, or could be distributed between the two. That apparatus conventionally receives information relating to the quality of potential communications between the MS and at least some of the BSs and optionally other information such as data on the load on at least some of the BSs. Using this information the apparatus determines which base station(s) an MS should communicate with and issues instructions to the BSs and the MS accordingly.

For the W-CDMA system it is proposed, in line with existing systems such as GSM, that a mobile station will transmit to the network measurement reports on communication quality with six nearby cells. For example, according to the GSM standard a report on a nearby ("neighbouring") cell will occupy 17 reserved bits in a standard reporting message of 107 bits. The reporting message can therefore contain reports on only six nearby cells. Such reporting message is to be sent by a mobile station in each multiframe - i.e. once every 480ms.

The inventors of the present invention have identified that especially in multisystem or multiband networks and/or in cellular communication systems operating in a multilayer environment the number of cells with which the mobile station may interact might often be greater than six. It could therefore be advantageous for a mobile station to be able to transmit measurement reports for

more than six cells. This would be especially advantageous in multisystem or multiband networks and/or in cellular communication systems operating in a multilayer environment. In general, multimode systems can be defined as communication environments where the mobile station may be in a service area where it can be served by more than one serving network, system, standard, frequency or the like. An example of a multiband system is a system in which a dual-band mobile station can be served by GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications) networks operating at 900 MHz and 1800 MHz. Another example is a system in which a mobile station can be served by a GSM network and a UMTS/W-CDMA network, or a GSM network and a DAMPS network.

It would thus be desirable for a mobile station to be able to report on potential communications links with more than six cells. One way in which this could be achieved is by lengthening the reporting message to give room for measurement reports on more than six cells. However, this would have major problems of incompatibility with existing systems. Another possibility would be for the level of reporting to be altered so as to occupy fewer than 17 bits. However, as well as problems of incompatibility with existing systems, this solution would be expected to reduce the reporting accuracy and therefore the precision of handover decisions.

There is therefore a need for a practical method whereby a mobile station can transmit reporting messages on links with an increased number of cells. Such a method should preferably be capable of retaining a degree of consistency with existing standards and standardisation proposals. By this means, the method may preferably enhance multisystem, multiband and/or multimode operation. It is one aim of the present invention to at least partially address one or more of the above issues.

According to one aspect of the present invention there is provided a method for reporting link information in a communication system including a communication

terminal and a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link; the method comprising: the communication terminal determining link information for each of the communication links; and the communication terminal periodically transmitting link messages, each link message containing link information for a first set of the communication links, and the link messages being formatted such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a larger set of the communication links.

The said larger set is suitably larger than the first set of the communication links. The method preferably includes the step of defining the said larger set, for example by selecting communication links to form the said larger set.

Preferably link information for at least one of the communication links is contained in each of successive link messages. For instance, each successive link message may contain link information for one, two or more of the communication links, whilst link information for others of the communication links is not contained in every link message. That latter link information may be sent in link messages spaced apart by a set amount, for example every two or three link messages, or as determined by a less strict periodic or aperiodic scheme.

It is thus preferred that successive link messages contain link information for at least one communication link in common. It is also preferred that link messages spaced apart by a set interval – for example by one, two or three other messages – regularly contain link information for the same ones of the communication links.

The method may comprise the step of determining a subset of the communication links having the best link according to a selected measure, and wherein link information for the communication links of that subset is contained in each of successive link messages. The subset preferably consists of one communication link, or alternatively of two communication links.

It is preferred that periodically link messages contain link information for the same ones of the communication links.

The communication terminal is preferably capable of transmitting the link information in a plurality of schemes according to which link information is distributed between successive link messages. Such schemes may involve transmitting link information for a set of the communication links in alternate link messages, or in every third link message.

The communication system suitably includes a control unit (e.g. an MSC or the like) coupled to the transceivers. The method suitably comprises the step of causing at least one of the transceivers to transmit a scheme selection signal to the communication terminal indicative of the one of the plurality of schemes to be used by the communication terminal. The scheme selection signal may be transmitted on a broadcast channel. The scheme selection signal may be transmitted as part of a system information message. The method may suitably comprise the step of operating the communication terminal in response to the scheme selection signal so as to use the scheme indicated by the scheme selection signal.

The link messages may be transmitted over at least one of the said communication links. The link messages may be each sent in a respective multiframe. (The multiframe may be defined by reference to normal communications over the said communication links).

Each link message preferably contains link information for six of the communication links, and most preferably for only six of the communication links.

The link information for a communication link is preferably in some way indicative of the quality of communications over that link. The link information may, for example be indicative of received signal strength information for communications

over the link - for example of the strength of received broadcast signals over the link.

The method may suitably comprise the steps of receiving the link information and making a handover decision for the communication terminal on the basis of the link information. That decision may be made at an MSC or like equipment.

The method may comprise the step of the communication terminal signalling that it is capable of operating so as to transmit successive link messages containing link information for different ones of the communication links. That signalling may be performed on establishment by the communication terminal of a connection with the system.

According to the present invention from a second aspect there is provided a communication system comprising: a communication terminal; a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link; the communication terminal comprising link measurement means for measuring link information for each of the communication links; transmission means for periodically transmitting link messages, each link message containing link information for a first set of the communication links; and link message forming means for forming the link messages such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a larger set of the communication links.

According to the present invention from a third aspect there is provided a communication terminal for operation in a radio telecommunications system, the terminal comprising: communication means for communicating with one or more of a plurality of radio transceivers; measurement means for measuring a quality of signals received from each of the said transceivers over a respective communication link; and measurement message generation means for generating measurement messages for transmission by the communication means, each

measurement message containing measured quality information for a first set of the communication links; the measurement message generation means being capable of generating a series of measurement messages wherein groups of successive measurement messages collectively contain measured quality information for a larger set of the communication links.

Optional additional features of the second and third aspects of the present invention include features analogous to those set out above in relation to the first aspect of the present invention.

The communication terminal may be a radio and/or cellular telephone. Each transceiver may be a base station transceiver of a radio telephone system. The communication system may suitably be a cellular telephone network. The communication terminal may suitably be capable of communicating by radio with one or more, and preferably all, of the transceivers.

The present invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

figure 1 shows schematically the configuration of a typical cellular radio telecommunications network;

figure 2 shows a schematic diagram of some components of a mobile station; and

figure 3 illustrates signal flow in a measurement reporting arrangement.

The present reporting method and associated apparatus will be described below with general reference to the GSM system and to the proposed UMTS / W-CDMA standard, but it will be understood that the method is analogously applicable to provide enhanced reporting in other telecommunications systems.

The present reporting method involves increasing the number of cells on which measurement reports may be sent by reducing the frequency with which reports

are sent on nearby ("neighbouring") cells. Thus, successive measurement report messages may include measurement data for different sets of nearby cells. In other words, measurement reports on neighbouring cells may be transmitted with different frequencies. Such frequencies may be the same or different. In a preferred arrangement, the mobile station determines a set of neighbours providing the best links to it; measurement reports are then sent for those cells in every report message, whereas information on other links is sent less frequently – for example in every second or third report message.

To avoid ambiguity, it should be noted that the term "neighbouring" is generally used to refer to any further cell that can be reached by a mobile station in a cell of the cellular communication system, without such a cell having to actually border any cell with which the mobile station is currently communicating. Thus "neighbouring" cells will typically be wholly or partly overlapping. Neighbouring cells may be cells of another communication network or cells of another frequency. This is the case when, for example, dual-band mobile stations are used.

Figure 1 which shows a cellular network. It should be appreciated that although Figure 1 shows base stations which each provide an omnidirectional cell, embodiments of the present invention may be implemented using any appropriate configuration of cells. It is also noted that the radio coverage area defining a cell may consist of a sector of a base station provided with a directional or sector antenna (not shown in Figure 1). Such a sector base station may use e.g. three 120° directional antennas whereby three radio coverage areas are provided, or four 90° directional antennas providing four radio coverage areas and so on, or any combinations of different radio coverage beam widths. It should also be appreciated that base stations may sometimes be referred to as node B (e.g. in the UMTS standard). For simplicity it will be assumed herein that each cell is associated with a single base station transceiver unit (BTS).

In Figure 1 each radio coverage area or cell is served by the respective base transceiver station BTS 1, 2, 3 etc. Each base transceiver station BTS is arranged to transmit signals to and receive signals from the mobile station MS 7 in the cell. Likewise, the mobile station is able to transmit signals to and receive signals from a respective base transceiver station. The mobile station 7 accomplishes this via wireless (preferably radio) communication with the base stations. Typically a number of mobile stations will be in communication with each base station although only one mobile station is shown in Figure 1 for clarity.

Each of the base stations is connected to a network controller, which in one form of the exemplifying GSM system comprises a base station controller (BSC) 10 connected further to a Mobile Switching Centre (MSC) 9. In the described embodiment the MSC is used as a network controller. In some arrangements the base station controller 10 controlling one or several base stations between the network controller and the base stations may be omitted. The network controller controls its service area, i.e. the cells and base stations connected to it, either directly or via the base station controller. It is noted that typically more than one network controller is provided in a network. The network controller is connected to other elements or parts of the telecommunications network system via a suitable linking or gateway apparatus, such as Gateway Mobile Switching Centre (GMSC; not shown).

The implementation of the basic communication formatting between the mobile station, the base station and the controller in GSM and UMTS / W-CDMA systems is known, and will thus not be discussed in more detail herein. It is sufficient to note that the interface may comprise channels in both uplink and downlink directions between the mobile station in the cell associated with a given base station and that the information sent to the mobile station and the data may be sent in any suitable format. The messages sent from the mobile stations may include information identifying the mobile station (for instance, MS ID and/or IMSI

(Mobile Station Identity and/or International Mobile Subscriber Identity, respectively)).

As also illustrated in Figure 1, the mobile station can be simultaneously in the signalling or coverage area of several cells and their associated base stations. The mobile station is arranged to perform measurements in order to be able to provide information based on which a suitable cell can be selected for serving the mobile station. In other words, in addition to controlling the ongoing connection with the servicing base station, the mobile station performs measurements concerning the neighbouring cells as well. These measurements may be of any appropriate feature that is in some way indicative of the quality of potential traffic communications over the link between the mobile station and that cell; examples are signal strength of the base station for the cell as received at the mobile station, error rate of communications from that base station (e.g. bit error rate or frame error rate), or delay or distortion of such communications.

Figure 2 shows in more detail a mobile station capable of operation in the system of figure 1. The mobile station, which in this case is a cellular telephone, includes a radio transceiver unit 20, a measurement unit 21 and a control unit 22. These may be implemented as distinct units as illustrated in figure 2 or by software running on common hardware.

The transceiver 20 transmits traffic signals to and receives traffic signals from one or more base stations to which the mobile station is currently attached. The transmissions to and from the mobile station are split into multiframes, each of which occupies 480ms. The transceiver also receives signals from other base stations, typically signals on one or more broadcast channels e.g. BCCH. These signals as well as signals received from the base station(s) to which the mobile station is attached are directed to the measurement unit 21. The measurement unit measures a feature of those signals as mentioned above - for example received signal strength. The measurement results are passed to the control unit

22 which generates measurement reports according to a scheme that will be described below. The measurement reports are then transmitted to the base station(s) to which the mobile station is attached. The measurement reports are then used by the network to make handover decisions.

The measurement reports themselves are suitably of a known format, for example of 107 bits including 17 bits per cell / base station that is being reported on.

The scheme used by the control unit may be one of a number of schemes, example schemes being described below.

- **Reporting Scheme 0**

For reasons of backwards compatibility the control unit is capable of transmitting measurement reports in which each successive measurement report includes measurement information for communication links with the six cells determined by the control unit to be the best (e.g. being received most strongly or with fewest errors). Thus it will normally be the case that successive messages will include data relating to the same six cells.

- **Reporting Scheme 1**

The measurement unit measures data for links with up to 10 neighbouring cells. These cells will be termed N1 to N10. The two best cells are selected by the control unit. These are, for example, the two that are received with the highest signal level. Measurement data for these cells (N1 and N2, say) is sent in every multiframe (MF) - that is every 480 ms. Measurement data for each of the remaining 8 neighbours (N3-N10) is distributed between successive multiframe so as to be sent every second multiframe - that is every 960 ms

The structure of successive measurement reports under this system, with each measurement report including slots for data on measurements of six cell links, is shown in the following table:

Measurement Report Slot Number	Multiframe n	Multiframe n+1	Multiframe n+2	....
1	N1	N1	N1	....
2	N2	N2	N2	....
3	N3	N4	N3	....
4	N5	N6	N5	....
5	N7	N8	N7	....
6	N9	N10	N9	....

The values reported for the neighbours N3-N10 could be an averaged value of measurements over the appropriate two multiframe period before which they are sent, so little or no information is lost. Alternatively the first, second, higher or lower value measured for each of neighbours N3-N10 over the period could be sent.

- **Reporting Scheme 2**

The measurement unit measures data for links with up to 15 neighbouring cells. These cells will be termed N1 to N15. The best neighbour (N1) is identified and a report transmitted for it every 480 ms. The 2nd to 7th best neighbours (N2-N7) are identified and a report transmitted for each of them every 960 ms. The remaining 8 neighbours (N8-N15) are reported on every 1920 ms.

The structure of successive measurement reports under this system, with each measurement report including slots for data on measurements of six cell links, is shown in the following table:

Measurement Report Slot Number	MF n	MF n+1	MF n+2	MF n+3	MF n+4	....
1	N1	N1	N1	N1	N1	....
2	N2	N3	N2	N3	N2	....
3	N4	N5	N4	N5	N4	....
4	N6	N7	N6	N7	N6	....
5	N8	N9	N10	N11	N8	....
6	N12	N13	N14	N15	N12	....

Note that the value reported for the neighbours N2-N7 could be an averaged value over the two multiframe between reports on them, and the value reported for N8-N15 could be an average over the four multiframe periods between reports on them, so little or no information may be lost. Alternatively, one of the other selection procedures described above could be used.

• Reporting Scheme 3

In this scheme the control unit 22 of the mobile station ranks (e.g. on the basis of received signal level) the quality of the links with neighbouring base stations. The reporting rate for each neighbour is determined by its ranking.

In a first approach the mobile can re-evaluate the ranking of the neighbours and therefore their reporting rate each 2nd multiframe (960 ms). In order to do so the averaged value of the signal level over the previous 2 multiframe can be used.

There would be two options to perform such averaging:

1. The mobile stores all the individual values determined over the 2 multiframe. In the worst case this would require it to store 2 received signal level (RxLev) values (of conventionally 6 bits each), for example for a maximum of, say, 15 neighbours. This would require a total of 180 bits of memory in the control unit 22 of the mobile.

2. Ongoing averaging. The averaging can be an ongoing averaging in order to minimise the required memory. If this approach is used selected the memory required in the mobile would be only 90 bits. Example:

Multiframe	1	2
RxLev	30	45
Average	30	37.5

Alternatively, the mobile could re-evaluate the ranking of the neighbours and therefore their reporting rate each 4th multiframe (1920 ms). In order to do so the averaged value of the signal level over the previous 4 multiframe could be used.

In order to do so there would be two options:

1. The mobile stores all the values measured over the 4 multiframe. In the worst case this would require to store 4 RxLev values (6 bits each) for a maximum of, say, 15 neighbours. This requires a total of 45 bytes of memory in the mobile.
2. Ongoing averaging. The averaging can be an ongoing averaging in order to minimise the required memory. If this approach was selected the memory required in the mobiles would be only 90 bits. Example:

Multiframe	1	2	3	4
RxLev	30	45	33	60
Average	30	37.5	36	42

This scheme provides an extremely flexible way for the mobile station to send measurement information from more cells to the network.

The schemes 1 to 3 described above provide the facility to transmit measurement reports on links with neighbouring cells at different rates depending on their signal level ranking.

The mobile station may automatically select an appropriate reporting scheme, or the network may indicate to the mobile station which reporting scheme is to be used. In the latter case, the indication may be by means of a scheme indication signal, which could be sent over a broadcast channel, for example the BCCH, and for example as part of the BCCH System Information message. This would allow network operators to control the introduction and operation of the enhanced reporting schemes described above. The use of two bits forming the scheme indication signal would allow the implementation of 4 different reporting modes. Figure 3 illustrates the signal flow in such an implementation.

Preferably, mobiles that are able to offer the enhanced reporting schemes 1 to 3 described above should signal the availability of such schemes to the network. This may, for example be done each time they establish a connection to the network. At that time the mobiles supporting the above functionality may preferably inform the network that they are "alternative neighbour reporting compliant", so the network knows the available formats of neighbour reporting for a connection with those mobiles.

The selection of the relevant cells for reporting may be based on any appropriate predefined rule of selection. The rules may be defined in the standards the mobile station and/or the communication system are arranged to use. The rules may be stored permanently in the mobile station. According to one possibility the rules are stored in an appropriate network element and transmitted therefrom to the mobile station when ever required. The rules for selecting relevant cells may also be changed when this is deemed necessary. The selection of the relevant cells may be based, with no limitation to the following, on the measured signalling levels, used radio frequencies, direction of the movement of the mobile station, loading conditions of the neighbouring cells and so on.

In some of the schemes described above it is possible that resolution of neighbour cell measurement information could be lost due to the increased period between

transmissions of some neighbour data. This can be mitigated or even overcome by means of pre-averaging averaging of individual measured values by the control unit 22 of the mobile station. If the mobile performs pre-averaging of the raw information that is collected by the measurement unit 21, then no information would be lost as the reported values for those neighbours with slower reporting rate will contain the averaged value of all the available information. Many networks are, in any event, configured to average the neighbour values reported by mobiles. In the system described above, since the network should know the reporting method used by each connection with a mobile and should know the reporting rate of each reported neighbour, it could apply a different averaging to each neighbour. Therefore, from a system perspective the performance of the standard and the alternate reporting methods could be enhanced, as the result after the averaging is the same, but the number of neighbours available to the system could be dramatically increased.

The period between measurement report messages is, of course, system-dependant and could be greater or less than 480ms.

The present invention may include any feature or combination of features disclosed herein either implicitly or explicitly or any generalisation thereof, irrespective of whether it relates to the presently claimed invention. In view of the foregoing description it will be evident to a person skilled in the art that various modifications may be made within the scope of the invention.

CLAIMS

1. A method for reporting link information in a communication system including a communication terminal and a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link; the method comprising:

the communication terminal determining link information for each of the communication links; and

the communication terminal periodically transmitting link messages, each link message containing link information for a first set of the communication links, and the link messages being formatted such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a larger set of the communication links.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein link information for at least one of the communication links is contained in each of successive link messages.

3. A method as claimed in claim 2, comprising the step of determining a subset of the communication links having the best link according to a selected measure, and wherein link information for the communication links of that subset is contained in each of successive link messages.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the subset consists of two communication links.

5. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein periodically link messages contain link information for the same ones of the communication links.

6. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the communication terminal is capable of transmitting the link information in a plurality of schemes

according to which link information is distributed between successive link messages.

7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the communication system includes a control unit coupled to the transceivers, and the method comprises the step of causing at least one of the transceivers to transmit a scheme selection signal to the communication terminal indicative of the one of the plurality of schemes to be used by the communication terminal.

8. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the scheme selection signal is transmitted on a broadcast channel.

9. A method as claimed in claim 7 or 8, wherein the scheme selection signal is transmitted as part of a system information message.

10. A method as claimed in any of claims 7 to 9, comprising the step of operating the communication terminal in response to the scheme selection signal so as to use the scheme indicated by the scheme selection signal.

11. A method as claimed in any of claims 7 to 10, wherein one of the schemes involves transmitting link information for a set of the communication links in alternate link messages.

12. A method as claimed in any of claims 7 to 11, wherein one of the schemes involves transmitting link information for a set of the communication links in every third link message.

13. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the link messages are transmitted over at least one of the said communication links.

14. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein each link message is sent in a respective multiframe of communications over the said communication links.

15. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein each link message contains link information for six of the communication links.

16. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the link information for a communication link is indicative of the quality of communications over that link.

17. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, comprising the steps of receiving the link information and making a handover decision for the communication terminal on the basis of the link information.

18. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, comprising the step of the communication terminal signalling that it is capable of operating so as to transmit successive link messages containing link information for different ones of the communication links.

19. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the step of the communication terminal signalling that it is capable of operating so as to transmit successive link messages containing link information for different ones of the communication links is performed on establishment by the communication terminal of a connection with the system.

20. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the communication terminal is a radio telephone.

21. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein each transceiver is a base station transceiver of a radio telephone system.

22. A communication system comprising:

a communication terminal;

a plurality of transceivers with each of which the communication terminal can communicate over a respective communication link;

the communication terminal comprising link measurement means for measuring link information for each of the communication links; transmission means for periodically transmitting link messages, each link message containing link information for a first set of the communication links; and link message forming means for forming the link messages such that groups of successive link messages collectively contain link information for a larger set of the communication links.

23. A communication terminal for operation in a radio telecommunications system, the terminal comprising:

communication means for communicating with one or more of a plurality of radio transceivers;

measurement means for measuring a quality of signals received from each of the said transceivers over a respective communication link; and

measurement message generation means for generating measurement messages for transmission by the communication means, each measurement message containing measured quality information for a first set of the communication links; the measurement message generation means being capable of generating a series of measurement messages wherein groups of successive measurement messages collectively contain measured quality information for a larger set of the communication links.

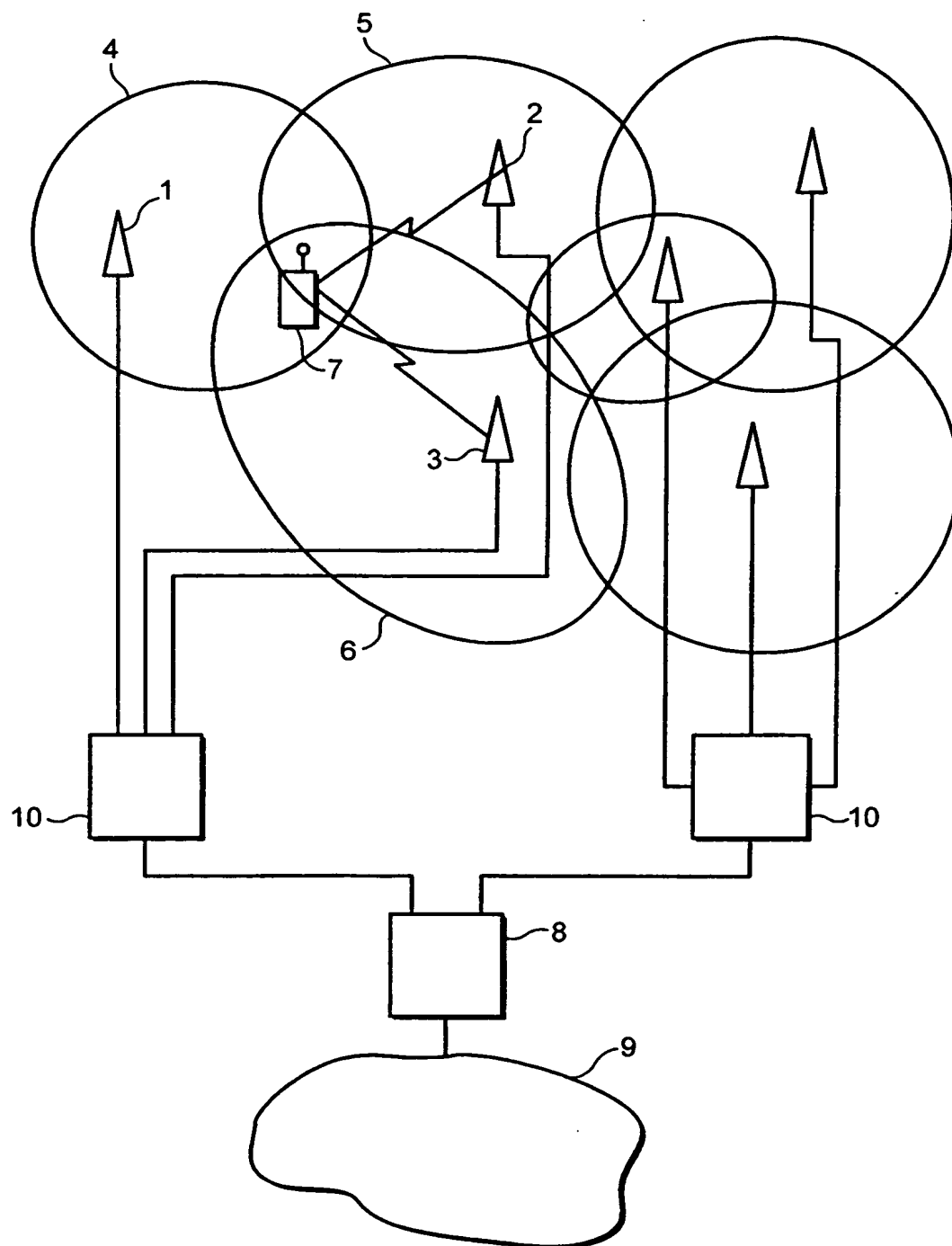


FIG. 1

2 / 2

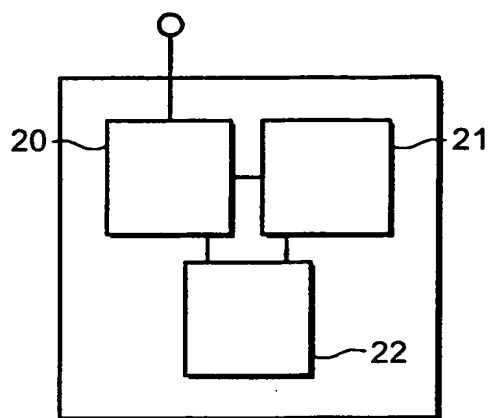


FIG. 2

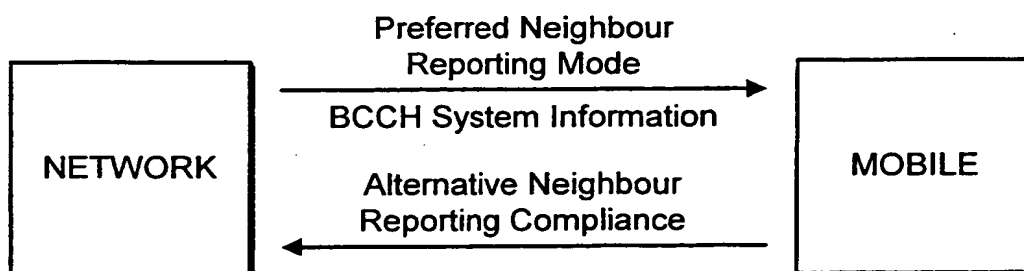


FIG. 3